Legislation.

13. The most important legislative measure under consideration is that for amending the Jenmi and Kudiyan Regulation, V of 1071. Towards the close of 1104, a round table conference of the representatives of the *jenmies* and the *kudiyans* was held under the presidency of the then Dewan, and as a result, an amending Bill was introduced in the Legislative Council. The Bill was referred to a Select Committee, which reported in due course. When the second reading of the Bill was taken up, the Council agreed to refer the Bill back to another Committee. This Committee was appointed to examine and report, after taking evidence, whether, in respect of *kanapattam* lands, an arrangement can reasonably be made that the *pattam* of such lands be taken to be the same as the *pattam* fixed for land revenue purposes, and out of that *pattam*, whatever is left after deducting the Sirkar tax, be taken to be the *jenmies'* due in lieu of all and every one of their claims and, if any such arrangement can reasonably be made, to draft and submit the necessary legislative provisions for the same. The Committee has toured the State in three batches for collecting the necessary evidence.

Trade and Shipping.

14. The decline in the total value of external trade noticed in 1105 was appreciable in 1106. The total value, which had fallen from Rs 21·13 crores in 1104 to Rs. 20·65 crores in 1105, went down to Rs. 17·31 crores in 1106. Exports formed 56 per cent. and imports 44 per cent of the total volume of trade. The fall in the value was due partly to a fall in the quantities exported and partly to the unprecedented fall in prices. The percentage of sea-borne trade to the total trade again fell from 31·6 to 28·73, but there was no fall in the tonnage of vessels that called at the Travancore ports. Government have sanctioned an estimate for Rs. 83,600 for special repairs to the Alleppey pier; and the construction at the Trivandrum port of an open godown has been sanctioned to provide adequate storage facilities to importers, particularly of paddy and rice. A survey of the Alleppey Roads was conducted at this Government's cost, by H. M. I. S. *Palinurus* in the first half of March 1931. An area of 15 square miles was surveyed and no material change, it was reported, was found in the depth of water in the Roads.

Cochin Harbour.

15. In September 1931, a conference was held in Madras under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble the Law Member to the Madras Government to discuss the estimate prepared by the Harbour Engineer-in-Chief for carrying out the Fourth Stage works at Cochin. The Dewan took part in the conference along with the Chief Engineer and the Principal Port Officer, and a representative of the Travancore Chamber of Commerce and of the Indian merchants at Alleppey. Other outstanding questions relating to the development of the port, such as the definition

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

of the port limits, the exercise of civil and criminal jurisdiction over the limits of the port of Cochin when it is developed, the introduction of the Cochin Port Trust Act, the working of the Cochin Public Canals and Ferries Regulation and the supply of fresh water to the port of Cochin were also considered. The final decision of the Government of India has not yet been arrived at in regard to the date from which the regular practice of ocean-going steamers entering the harbour and discharging at moorings inside the backwater should be deemed to have been established and the tripartite division of the customs revenue realised at the port of Cochin should take effect : a conference is to be held on this subject in Delhi next month.

Law's Delays Commissioner

16. Reference was made in my predecessor's opening address at the last session to the work of the Law's Delays Commissioner appointed to enquire into the question of delay in the disposal of civil cases, to suggest measures for the more speedy execution of decrees and orders issued by the courts and to examine and report upon the need for the readjustment of the territorial jurisdiction of civil courts. Rao Bahadur G. Sankara Pillai entered on his duties as Commissioner on the 22nd Meenam 1105 and practically completed the work on the 30th Tulam 1107, since which date he has kindly agreed to continue as Honorary Commissioner to see the report through the press.

Joint Stock Companies.

17. The office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Compaines, which was being held by Mr. K. Venkata Rao, Director of Registration, was, on his retirement, attached to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. The number of companies registered during 1106 was 40 against 86 in the previous year, thus reflecting the depression in business conditions. A remarkable feature of the first six months of the current year has been the rush in the registration of what are locally known as free insurance companies. The first indigenous insurance company was registered in 1105; twelve such concerns were registered in 1106; and of the fifty-four companies registered since the beginning of 1107, as many as forty-two are insurance companies. Insurance, unlike other business, requires little or no capital and the smallness of the premia or subscriptions levied makes the new ventures attractive to the people at large. These companies do not insure lives on medical certificates but on benefit funds offering to pay bonus on the happening of certain contingencies when calls would also be made on the subscribers. As the concerns are private companies, the Registrar's control over them under the Travancore Companies Regulation, I of 1092, is negligible and the time seems to have arrived to undertake legislation on the lines of the Insurance Acts in force in British India.

Public Works.

18. The financial situation necessitated a curtailment in the programme of new works in 1106 and the expenditure on ordinary public works charged to revenue amounted only to Rs. 39·16 lakhs against

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly